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1. A method of marking an initial defective block in a semiconductor memory device having a memory area thereof divided into a plurality of blocks and provided with an ECC function, comprising the steps of:

detecting an initial defective block; and  
writing an ECC code causing an ECC error  
in a predetermined area of the initial defective  
block.

2. The method as claimed in claim 1,  
wherein said step of writing an ECC code includes  
the steps of:

suspending an ECC generation function internal to said semiconductor memory device; and writing the ECC code from an exterior of said semiconductor memory device.

3. The method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

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        reading data from the initial defective
block after said step of writing an ECC code;
        performing an ECC check on the read data;

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rejecting said semiconductor memory device as being defective if an ECC error is detected.

30                    6. The semiconductor memory device as  
claimed in claim 5, wherein information about  
presence or absence of an ECC error is output to an  
exterior of the semiconductor memory device.

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7. The semiconductor memory device as  
claimed in claim 6, wherein the information about  
presence or absence of an ECC error is output to the  
exterior of the semiconductor memory device in  
5 response to a predetermined command input after a  
data read operation.

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8. The semiconductor memory device as  
claimed in claim 5, wherein information about  
whether ECC correction is possible is output to an  
exterior of said semiconductor memory device.

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9. The semiconductor memory device as  
20 claimed in claim 8, wherein the information about  
whether ECC correction is possible is output to the  
exterior of said semiconductor memory device in  
response to a predetermined command input after a  
data read operation.

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